
Robert Klein Reacts to Nomination to Second Term as Chair of CIRM Independent Citizens' Oversight Committee

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SAN FRANCISCO – Today, Robert N. Klein, author of Proposition 71 and Chairman of the Independent Citizens Oversight Committee (ICOC), which oversees the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine (CIRM), reacted to his nomination by Governor Schwarzenegger and Lieutenant Governor Maldonado to a second term as Chair:

"I am honored to accept this nomination to a second term as Chair of the Independent Citizens Oversight Committee and remain as energized and committed as ever to our historic mission of accelerating the achievement of new scientific and medical breakthroughs through stem cell research.

Thanks to our collective cutting-edge progress here in California, we now stand at a critical juncture of unprecedented new discoveries and human clinical trials, ushering in new, tangible hopes of lifechanging successes. A blue-ribbon panel of experts recently concluded an exhaustive review of CIRM's scientific programs and made a number of recommendations to help accelerate CIRM's progress towards achieving the goal of delivering therapies and cures as soon as possible. In order to provide continuity during this period of transition as CIRM moves to the next stage of its development, I would, if elected, help guide the agency as it considers and implements these recommendations.

I want to thank Dr. Alan Bernstein for his willingness to consider joining our effort. Like the Governing Board's first Vice Chair, Dr. Ed Penhoet, Dr. Bernstein is a scientist and patient advocate of impeccable credentials who has already built an extraordinary legacy and, inspired by his example, I will work with the Board and the constitutional officers to identify candidates who meet his high standard to succeed me within the next 12 months. I look forward to submitting myself for full consideration by the Governing Board on December 15, along with my fellow nominees."

Questions and Answers about the ICOC Chair and Vice-Chair Selection Process

Q: What is the process for nominating candidates for Chair and Vice Chair?

A: Under Proposition 71, four Constitutional Officers (the Governor, the Lieutenant Governor, the Treasurer and the Controller) are responsible for nominating candidates for Chair and Vice Chair of CIRM's Governing Board, which is composed of 29 members (27 members appointed by the constitutional officers, the Speaker of the Assembly and the Senate President Pro Tem, in addition to the Chair and Vice Chair.) The Governing Board elects a Chair and a Vice Chair from among the nominees.

Q: When will the election occur?

A: The Governing Board is scheduled to consider nominees for Chair and Vice Chair at its meeting on December 15, 2010.

Q: What are the terms of the Chair and the Vice Chair?

A: The Chair and Vice Chair serve six year terms and are eligible to serve two terms.

Q: Is Dr. Alan Bernstein a candidate for Chair?

A: Dr. Alan Bernstein is a skilled scientist, administrator and leader. Dr. Bernstein currently serves as the Executive Director of the Global HIV Vaccine Enterprise, an alliance of independent organizations around the world dedicated to accelerating the development of a preventive HIV vaccine. As the founding President of the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Dr. Bernstein helped build the organization into one of the world's leading research agencies and led the effort to promulgate the medical and ethical standards that permitted Canadian scientists to proceed with human embryonic stem cell research. Dr. Bernstein would have been an outstanding nominee for Chair of CIRM's Governing Board, but due to a technical legal requirement regarding citizenship, he is not eligible to serve as a nominee.

